

Short Scheme OF THE USURPATIONS

That have been made
By several of our former PRINCES,
Upon the Rightful Heirs to this

CROWN;

With the Sad and Desolate Effects that
were Consequent thereupon.

I Shall begin with that of

Harold.

First, as the Usurpation of *Harold* divided the Nobility and Gentry of the Kingdom, some standing up for *Edward Erbeling* (the Inheritance to the Crown by Right of Blood in Succession descending to him, as being *Edward the Confessor's* elder Brother's Son) and others for *Harold*, the Son of Earl *Godwin*, their then Regnant King; so it gave Incouragement to *William Duke of Normandy*, to pretend, that *Edward the Confessor* had, by his last Will and Testament, consigned him his Successor, and Heir to the Crown: and upon that Force, and upon the Oath which *Harold* had made to him, whilst he was his Prisoner in *Normandy*, that he would preserve the Kingdom for him: after the Death of *Edward the Confessor* without Issue, *William* made his Invasion upon *England*, as soon as he found *Harold* had trick'd him, and got the Crown. He upon his

own Head, and by the overthrow and death of *Harold*, in the Battel of *Hastings*, he possessed himself of the Kingdom: But that which seems to be a more particular instance of the stroke of Divine Justice, is, That not only he himself was slain, but almost all those who were assistant to him (in that his Violation of the Oath he had so solemnly made to Duke *William*) fell with him in the Field; and that single Battel cost the *English* near seven thousand Lives.

II. The next we shall mention, is,

William the Second,

Surnamed *Rufus*, who notoriously Usurped upon the Right of his Elder Brother *Robert*, and after he had got the Crown, the Historians of those Times abound with the Ravages and Depredations which he made upon both Church and State; but the Justice of Heaven was not very long in overtaking him, for having demolished several Churches, and also destroyed several Towns to make *New Forest*, even in that very place, whilst he was Hunting, an Arrow shot by Sir *Walter Tyril*, his Bow-bearer, mist the Deer, but struck the King in his Breast; of which Wound, with one only Groan, he fell down, and dyed.

III. Upon which,

Henry the First,

Surnamed *Beau-Clark*, because of his Learning, which was great at that time, took the advantage of his elder Brother *Robert's* absence, then in *Syria*, and so mounted the Throne of Majesty. But this occasioned great Convulsions and Confusions, after his return, not only in *England*, but in *Normandy*; several both of the *Normans* and the *English*, taking up Arms in behalf of the Right of *Robert*, which had almost utterly ruined *Normandy*, as it had extremely impoverished *England*, and ended not but with *Robert's* being deprived first of his Liberty, after of his Country, and lastly, of that which was dearer than either, the light of his Eyes, having them both put out (by his Brothers Commandment) in *Cardiff Castle*, in *Wales*, whither he had brought him Prisoner, from the Fight at *Tanquerville*, in *Normandy*.

This *Henry*, had only two Children, according to the best received Opinion of our Historians, viz. *William* and *Maud*. And to secure the Crown to his Son *William*, he got his Parliament to declare him Heir of the Kingdom, and made all the Estates to do Homage to him; but shortly after, (as a signal Punishment from Heaven, upon him, for his Injustice and Inhumanity) this, his Innocent Son *William*, the main hope

of his Family, was drowned, being Shipwrecked, in his return out of Normandy : And now for want of other Heirs, He, still against the manifest Right of his Nephew *William*, the Son of *Robert*, procured in a Convention of the Estates of the Land, the Crown to be entailed upon his Daughter *Maud*, and her Heirs, after his Death ; and caused a Solemn Oath to be taken for the Confirmation thereof. But she being intangled in her Fathers Fate, could never attain to be a Queen, however a Dutchesse and an Empress, being disappointed by one that had less Right, and not so good Pretence, as her own Father ; which you shall hear in my Fourth instance of

IV. *Stephen, Earl of Mortaine and Boloine.*

For such is the Curse of Usurpation, that the boldness of one, commonly makes way for another Intruder. No sooner was King *Henry* Dead, but presently steps upon the Stage of Royalty, *Stephen*, Earl of *Boloine*, third Son to *Stephen* Earl of *Blois* and *Champaigne*, by *Adela*, fourth Daughter of King *William* the Conquerour, by *Maud* his Wife. And tho' there were two other precedent in Right to him, viz. *Maud* the Empress, and *Theobald* his elder Brother ; the latter, the supposed Heir, and before him by Natural, the former the declared Heir, and before him by Judicial Right, and that to which himself had sworn ; yet he, taking the Advantage of *Primus Occupans*, invades both Rights, and partly by his large promises, partly by the strong interest of his Allies ; but more indeed by force, than any good Reason, he procures the Crown to be set upon his Head. But during his whole Reign, there was nothing but War and Confusion in the Land, the whole Nation being divided between King *Stephen*, and *Maud* the Empress, according to their several Interests or Affections, some taking part with her, others with him ; these to discharge their Conscience, those their Honour, some to advance their Fortunes, others to secure their Advancements. Thus was this Body Politick, miserably tormented with the Confluxions of Might and Right ; at one time, *Stephen* prevails, at another, *Mauds* Party gets the better. Once the King was taken Prisoner, and then all hopes on his side were lost, but the Queen, his Consort, heading her Husbands Forces, brought the contested Title to a second Tryal, with so much better success than he, that the Victorious Empress was forced to give place to the more Victorious Queen ; and he recovering his Liberty, nothing could settle the Peace of the Kingdom but the Death of *Eustace*, Son and Heir to the King, and that of the Earl of *Gloucester*, the only Pillar which supported the Empress, which produced the General Agreement both of King *Stephen*, and the Estates of the Realm, that he should enjoy the Crown during his Life, and the Reversion expectant should be to *Henry*, the Son of *Maud*, after his Death.

V. But neither was *Henry*, surnamed *First-Emperer*, afterwards King

Henry the Second,

Excusable in this Point: For when he took upon him the Crown, he committed an open wrong against his Mother, who was at that time living, and the only Rightful Heir to it. And if we consult the History of his Life, and consider the Rebellion that broke out against him, by his second Son *Henry*, (*William*, his eldest Son, dying in his Infancy) to which *Henry*, he had given too early an Expectation of his Kingdom, by having been perswaded to Crown him King in his own life time, and then found, too late, that a Crown was no Estate to be made over in Trust: I say, when we consider his Rebellion, and the Rebellions of his other Sons, *Richard*, *Geoffrey*, and *John*, by the Instigation and Assistance of the French King, and the heavy Curse he left them all when he Died, this looking so like a Judgment from Heaven, it cannot be thought a hard construction to say, It seems to be the Just Effects of his Undutifulness to, and Usurpation upon the visible Right of his Mother *Maud*.

VI. King *Richard* being dead, who was the third Son, and Successor to his Father, *Henry* the Second, his fifth, and only Brother then living,

Earl John,

Became his Successor, though he were not his Heir, as we shall shew presently. This *John*, not only endeavoured to Usurp upon his Brother *Richard* in his life time, whilst he was gone to the Holy War; and after he was in *Austria* and *Germany*, kept Prisoner by the Emperour, laboured all he could against his Release: But after the Death of King *Richard*, he seized both upon the Dukedom of *Normandy*, and the Crown of *England*, against the Apparent Right of *Arthur*, Duke of *Britany*, Son of *Geoffrey Plantagenet*, *John*'s elder Brother. What Wars, what Miseries and Calamities did not this wretched Nation feel, throughout his Usurped Sovereignty over it! The Historians are loaded with them; and they make his whole Reign seem to be nothing but a Sea of Blood, and a Dreadful Scene of Rapine and Cruelty, both abroad and at home. Abroad, he not only lost his ancient Patrimony, the Dutchy of *Normandy*, (which his Ancestors had held in despite of all the Power of *France*, and the rest of their Potent Neighbours, for above three hundred years) but with it, all the rest of his Possession on that side the Water; and all taken from him in less than a years space. At home, by his Wild Exorbitances, and Sacrilegious Ravages, upon the Church and Churchmen, he lost the Hearts and Affections of almost all his Subjects, and so disjointed the whole frame of his Government, that it was never rightly set again all his life

life time. And the coming over of Prince *Lewis*, into *England*, with a Fleet of six hundred Sail, to ease the miserable distresses of the complaining Barons and People, and they giving Oaths of Allegiance to, and joining themselves with him, together with the City of *London*, at last broke the Heart of this Irreligious, but otherwise, Indomitable Prince, whom God made a Scourge, to punish this Nation; for their unjust Admission of him to be their King, against the Divine Unquestionable Right of his Nephew *Arthur*, whom, after he had got him into his Custody, he Murdered in Prison, with his own Hands.

VII. To him, succeeded his Son *Henry*, surnamed of *Winchester*, (because that was the place of his Birth,) by the Name of

Henry the Third,

Who in truth, was, as to this Point, the same his Father had been before him, a plain Usurper upon the Right of *Eleanor*, the Sister of *Arthur*, (called the Damozel of *Britain*) whom King *John*, during the whole time of his Reign, had shut up in *Bristol* Castle; and who dyed not, till about the six and twentieth year of this Kings Reign. For which Injustice, Heaven may seem to have particularly punished him, by his disturbed and tumultuous Reign (the longest that ever any King of *England* had) and the many great disorders and confusions which happen'd in it, between him and his Barons. And as this King *Henry* had kept his Niece *Eleanor* a close Prisoner for six and twenty years, till she dyed; so (as it were by a most just Retribution) he himself was taken at the Battel of *Leicester*, and kept a Prisoner by the Rebellious Barons; and had it not been for the happier Fate of his Victorious Son, Prince *Edward*, in the Overthrow, he shortly after gave to the Insolent Earl of *Leicester*, and the whole Army of the Barons, at *Evesham*, in all probability, King *Henry* might have continued a Prisoner for many years longer, if not for the whole of his life.

VIII. I cannot in silence pass by the Deposition and Death of King

Edward the Second,

Surnamed of *Carnarvon*, to whom, although his Son *Edward* the Third succeeded, yet the mighty Wars which happened between him and the *French* King, Competitors for the Crown of *France*, the great effusion of the Blood of both Nations, and the general Poverty of this, to support those Wars, may seem to point at a very remarkable punishment, justly laid upon the Nation for such a Deposition and Death.

IX. To *Edward the Third*, succeeded his Grand-child *Richard the Second*, surnamed of *Bourdeaux*, Son to *Edward*, called the Black Prince, the Greatest and most Valiant Knight of his Age, who took *John the French King*, *Phillip* his Son, and many others Prisoners, at the Battel of *Poitiers*. This *Richard*, by the Practice and Power of his Kinsman, *Henry of Bullingbrook*, Duke of *Lancaster*, afterwards

Henry the Fourth,

Was forced to surrender his Crown and Kingdom to him. And as it hath been observed of Usurpers in general, that most of them have in-
deavoured, and all desired, to lay the Foundation of their Greatness in Religion; so we have no particular Example more remarkable, than that of this Usurper; who, (when the Unfortunate dispirited King had made his Act of Resignation in Parliament, and the Sentence of his Deposition had been there openly read) rising up, and with great shew of Devotion, crossing himself, made his Claim to the Kingdom, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and so great, at that time, was this *Henry's* Power, that no man daring to contradict him, He, the same day, obtained the Title of King, and the next month after, got himself to be Crowned at *Westminster*, with all the usual Rites and Ceremonies, against the Publick Right of the Earl of *March*, who in the fourth year of King *Richard*, was declared, by Parliament, to be Right Heir of the Crown, in case King *Richard* should dye without Issue. But whoever will considerately read the History of *Henry's* after life, may easily observe, he had not much Joy of his so ill gotten Kingdom, being intangled with Foreign Wars, and Rebellions at home; and meeting with nothing but dismal Earthquakes and Convulsions in his Government all his Reign. And a little before his Death, he had a taste of Divine Vengeance, in seeing himself, in a manner, deposed by his own Son, who finding him in an Apopleckick Fit, and (as it were thought) Breathless, took the Crown from off his Pillow, (where he kept it all his Sicknes) which however, it was returned again with unfeigned humility, yet the mis of it but for that moment only, gave such a check to his Conscience, that before he could bequeath it to his Son for good and all, he could not but acknowledge how little Right he had to it; and dying, submitted his Title to him, that is, the only Judge of Injured Kings.

and his Son
Henry the Fifth,

Surnamed of *Mornimant*, had likewise the same Fate with his Father; and tho' he met with great success in his Arms, yet he dyed his whole
of XI. Reign

Reign with Blood, by being in continual Wars with *France*, and encountering several Rebellions here at home, so that he never suffered himself, nor his people, to enjoy any Peaceful quiet all his days. But his Reign was short, and he kept his Kingdom but nine years, and when he left the World, *Fortune* left the *English*, and verified his Prophetick Revelation at the news of the Birth of his Son *Henry*, at *Windsor*, when in a fit of Rapture he cryed out, *Good Lord! Henry of Monmouth shall small time Reign, and get much, and Henry of Windsor shall long time Reign, and lose all; But Gods will be done.*

XI. *Henry the Sixth,*

Simained of *Windsor*, his Fathers only Child, was but about eight months old when he was Proclaimed King of *England*. The beginning of his Reign happened to be the best, and most prosperous, there being a plentiful stock of Brave Men left to spend upon, who behaving themselves so uprightly and carefully, that it appeared, the Trust reposed in them by the Father, had made a strong Impression of Love and Loyalty to the Son. But when the King came to be declared *bona fide*, as if Nature had quite wasted it self, and spent all its Spirits, Faction and Ambition broke in upon the Government, and made such a Rapture in the Reputation of their former Successes, that the *French King*, back'd with many Seconds, took that Advantage to re-inforce his Credit, and pressed so hard upon them, that all the well-built frame of their Fortunes, crack'd from top to bottom. And no less miserable was the condition of this Nation, during his whole Reign, by the lamentable Divisions of the two bloodies, *Lancaster* and *York*: One while the House of *York* got the better, and then again, that of *Lancaster* prevailed: By and by, down went the House of *Lancaster*, and up again came the House of *York*. Once while the King was deposed, and made a Prisoner, and then *Richard Duke of York*, in *Henry* the Sixths Name, Summons a Parliament, wherein he lays upon his Title to the Crown; and after relating the many miseries that had befallen the Realm, since the time of this Usurpation, he concluded, that he would not expect, nor desire, possession of the Crown, unless his descent was indisputable, and his Title without exception. Whereupon, the Parliament in regard of their Oaths and Allegiance to *Henry*, sealed it on him for life, the Remainder to *Richard* and his Heirs. Afterwards, *Henry's* Victorious Friends having slain Duke *Richard*, in a Battel, on *Wakefield-Green*, and set their Master at Liberty, one Parliament proclaimed him King; but within half a year after, another Parliament proclaimed *Edward*, the Son of *Richard* (afterwards *Edward the Fourth*) lawful King, and this our *Henry* an Usurper, who is again beaten, and taken a second time Prisoner with

his.

his only Son, and they are both kept in miserable hardship, and at last, both barbarously Murdered; and *Edward*, Duke of *York*, again got the Crown, notwithstanding several Acts of Entail that had been made to preserve the Succession in the *Lancastrian* Line.

XII. But this *Edward*, at his Death, leaving two young Sons and a Daughter behind him, *Richard*, Duke of *Gloucester*, their Uncle, taking advantage of their Infancy, by a Packed Parliament, got himself to be Declared King, by the Name of

Richard the Third:

And after that, getting the two Sons into his own Custody, without any respect either to God, or to the World, he unnaturally contrived, not only to bereave *Edward* the Fifth, proclaimed King, though never Crown'd, but likewise his other Brother *Richard*, Duke of *York*, both of their Dignity and their Lives together: And not only so, but his Great Favourite, the Duke of *Buckingham*, who had promoted him to the Government of the Kingdom, and had set the Crown on his Head, he caused shortly after to be Beheaded. But as the thing evil gotten is never well kept, through all the time of his Reign, there never ceased Death and Slaughter, till his own Destruction ended it. And as his Reign was extream bloody, the happiness of it was, that it prov'd but very short; for being hated by all men, for his many Savage Butcheries and Usurpation, he was slain in a Pitched Field at *Bosworth*, by *Henry*, Earl of *Richmond*, afterwards

Henry the Seventh, in Right of his Wife,

For he married the above-mentioned Sister of the two Innocent Murdered Princes, and so happily United the two Houses of *Lancaster* and *York* together, after (besides the many Skirmishes) sixteen Pitched Battels, in which there fell, by the Sword, and were Executed, *Nine score Dukes and Earls of the Blood Royal, and an infinite number of the Gentry and Commonalty of this Nation*.

F I N I S.